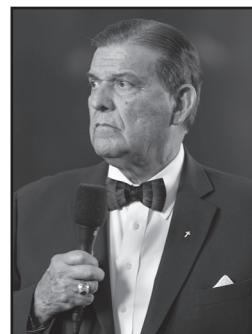


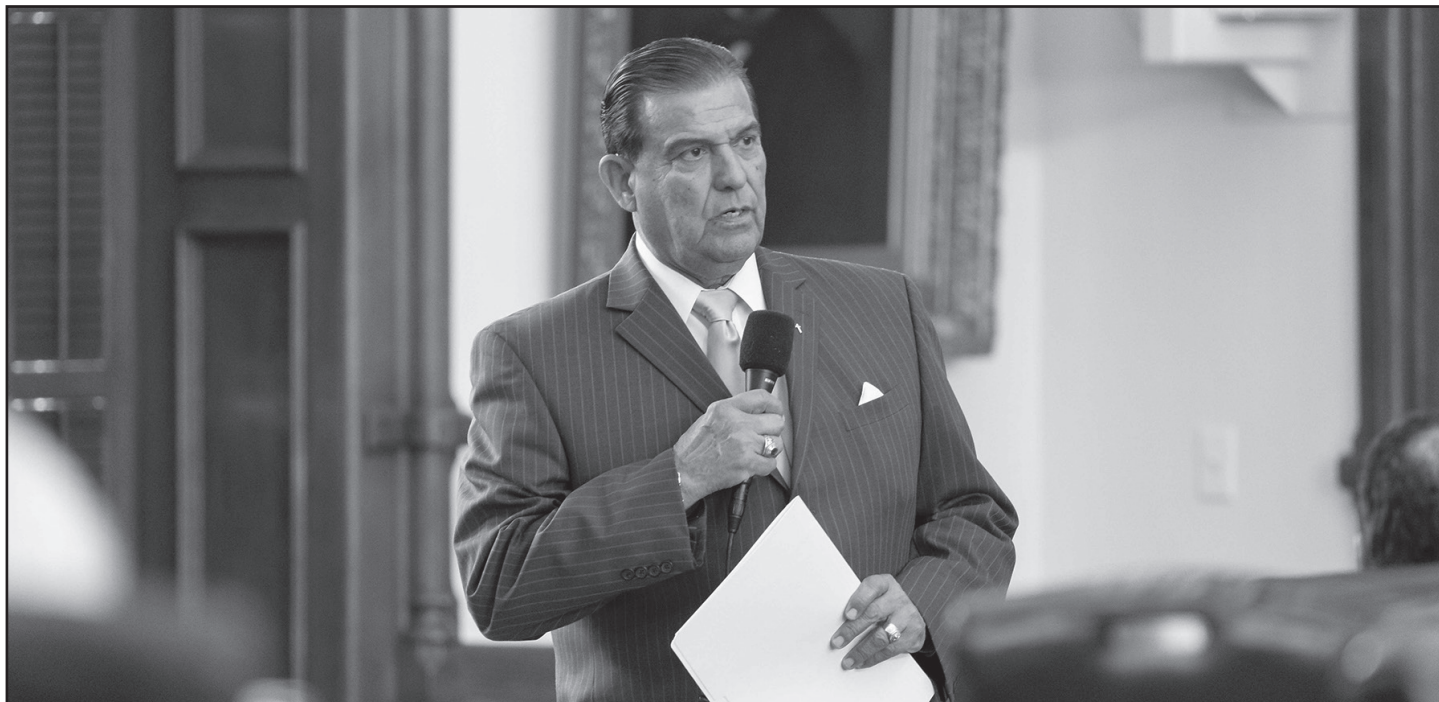
Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. Capitol Update

Fall 2019



OPEN LETTER TO CONSTITUENTS OF SENATE DISTRICT 27

Residents of Cameron, Hidalgo, Willacy, Kenedy, & Kleberg Counties



Dear Friends,

Thank you for continuing to trust me with the privilege of representing you. It is an honor to report to you the success that we in the Texas Legislature achieved in addressing the needs of our South Texas communities during the 2019 Legislative Session. I continued my commitment to promoting economic development, education, health care, housing, and infrastructure reforms.

Guided by a spirit of bipartisanship, policymakers worked diligently during the 86th Regular Session to reform state laws, strengthen programs, and focus state agencies so that our constituents will have greater opportunities to succeed in Texas. As news outlets have reported, significant progress was made in addressing the difficulties that challenged our state over the last two years. In doing so, Texas' commitment to help those in need was rejuvenated. The unprecedented need to rebuild after Hurricane Harvey's destruction, for example, led to carefully tailored initiatives that provide a helping hand to those reconstructing, and innovative solutions being institutionalized in our statutes to expedite rebuilding in the wake of future disasters.

With a balanced approach, statewide emergency items were addressed head on - including public education improvements, teacher compensation increases, school finance reforms, stronger school safety measures, and halting runaway property taxes. Locally, we effectively undertook issues that greatly help our region, including passing historic water and wastewater funding, establishing a regional transit authority, developing tools for better flood control, and putting into law greatly needed public health initiatives!

As the only Senate Committee Chairman from the border region, my successful track record of being able to work in a bipartisan manner greatly enabled me to have an influential say in many of the reforms that were developed. As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, I helped guide wide-ranging state disaster recovery reforms and spearheaded the historic re-write of a critical financial tool for our state and local communities that will help Texas maximize bond financing for the benefit of everyone in our state. As Vice-Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, I was in the middle of key policy discussions where appropriations and improvements to our state's education system were being written. As a Valley native, with a clear commitment to ensure that the needs of South Texas were being given the appropriate attention they deserve, I worked day and night with my colleagues in the Capitol to reform our state laws so that we could achieve momentous progress for the benefit of ALL our communities.

This Capitol Update provides a glimpse of the legislative initiatives that were passed that renew our state's commitment to our hardworking families. As you read these highlights and get a sense of the success that was achieved, you will notice that our region will be among the main beneficiaries of the hard work that we undertook during the 2019 Legislative Session.

In closing, you can rest assured that, being third in seniority, I will use my tenure in the Texas Senate to address any new challenges and opportunities as they present themselves in the upcoming months before the start of next session. With my steadfast commitment to improve our community, I pledge to you that I will continue to put the best interests of our Rio Grande Valley and the ranch lands of the coastal bend first and work tirelessly with state leaders for the betterment and advancement of our communities!

Sincerely,

Eddie Lucio, Jr.
State Senator, District 27

Sen. Lucio is Chairman of the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations and Vice-Chair of the Senate Education Committee, as well as member of the following Senate Committees: Veteran Affairs and Border Security; Select Committee on Redistricting; State Affairs; and Select Committee on Texas Ports.

Providing Children Access to Audiology Services

Unfortunately, a large number of children with hearing difficulties have been negatively impacted by a growing number of providers who no longer offer audiology services due to low reimbursement or nonpayment. In response, Sen. Lucio sponsored **House Bill 706** which provides certain students with hearing impairments eligibility for such services through the federal School Health and Related Services Program.

Helping Homeless Youth

Having more than 111,000 children and youth homeless in Texas, concerns have been raised that the state does not adequately consider their needs since they are not included in Texas' Low Income Housing Plan. For this reason, Sen. Lucio worked with children and homeless advocates and sponsored **House Bill 2564** to include homeless youth and young adults in the state's Housing Plan and provide critical guidance to better assist kids facing homelessness.

Creating Greater Access to Allergic Reaction Medicine

In 2019, South Texas parents of children who regrettably passed away due to allergic reactions testified that in order to better protect vulnerable Texans with very serious food allergies, Texas could provide better access in public places to epinephrine auto-injectors: life-saving medicine for very serious allergic reactions.

Honoring a Valley constituent who passed away due to an allergic reaction, Sen. Lucio authored **Senate Bill 839** and sponsored **House Bill 4260**, which ultimately passed, to potentially save lives by better equipping the public to handle allergic reaction emergencies and avoid needless hospitalization or potential death. The bill provides public places (e.g., child care facilities, colleges, restaurants, sports venues, and others) better access to - and administration of - epinephrine auto-injectors.

Men's Health Awareness

In order to bring awareness of men's health needs, Cameron and Hidalgo Counties recently declared Blue Tie Day in June. To strengthen their efforts, Sen. Lucio authored **Senate Bill 430** and designated June 13th as Blue Tie Day in Texas. Blue Tie Day highlights the importance of men's health, encourages regular checkup visits with a doctor, and promotes becoming informed of diseases that can adversely affect lives (such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease).

Raising Awareness of Bleeding Disorders

In Texas, hundreds of thousands of people live with bleeding disorders. Patient advocates informed the Legislature that the cost of medications to manage these disorders is very

expensive and is a barrier to accessible care. They maintain that increased awareness of these disorders may lead to solutions to address the difficulties experienced by bleeding disorder patients. After hearing from constituents afflicted with bleeding disorders, Sen. Lucio sponsored **House Bill 1508** to designate March as Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month in Texas.

Empowering Military Parents to Help their Children

Rio Grande Valley (RGV) advocates report that children of military families could be greatly assisted by having additional in-school support to overcome challenges associated with frequent military deployments which may impede them from achieving academic success. Unfortunately, in Texas there is no uniform system to determine if schools provide such services. In order to empower military parents to easily identify schools that meet the unique needs of their children, Sen. Lucio authored **Senate Bill 1557** to create a "purple star" designation for schools offering a well-defined set of services for children of military families.

Protecting Students, Especially Special Needs Children

Children advocates maintain that special education students are among the most vulnerable kids in our state. Unfortunately, Texas public schools are not expressly prohibited from using certain potentially dangerous means of discipline (e.g., restraints and seclusion techniques). Advocates report that special education children would be well served if state law outright prohibited such procedures. To better protect Texas children, Sen. Lucio authored **Senate Bill 712** to prohibit the use of potentially dangerous disciplinary techniques. By transparently laying out what are not acceptable disciplinary procedures, the bill protects children from abusive techniques, and assists teachers in developing better behavior management practices to foster greater productive learning environments for all children.

Protecting Texans from Human Trafficking

Significant efforts were taken to combat human trafficking in the 2019 Session. For example:

- Nearly \$3.5 million to strengthen the **Trafficking Prosecution Section**, which Sen. Lucio statutorily established in 2015 in the Attorney General's Office, to assist local law enforcement in investigating and prosecuting trafficking crimes. The additional funding will allow Texas to handle increased prosecutions;
- Over \$37 million provided to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to fund human trafficking prevention and enforcement, including **DPS Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts** first called for by

Sen. Lucio during the 2017 Session;

- **Senate Bill 20**, co-authored by Sen. Lucio, to create new programs to assist trafficking victims and provide additional tools to go after perpetrators, including increasing criminal penalties for those seeking trafficking services and creating new offenses for online promotion of this horrific crime; and
- **Senate Bill 72**, co-authored by Sen. Lucio, to establish a Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinating Council to develop a multi-agency strategic plan to ensure cross-agency coordination in the effort to combat human trafficking.

Initiatives for Women's Health

Sen. Lucio supported several legislative measures in 2019 that passed into law that focused on strengthening women's health initiatives, including a state budget that appropriated the **Women's Health Programs \$346.9 million** (which the Legislative Budget Board reports is an **increase of \$67.9 million** from the 2018 and 2019 fiscal years spending levels).

Under **Senate Bill 750**, co-authored by Sen. Lucio, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is required to (among other matters): apply for federal funds to implement a model of care to improve quality and accessibility for certain pregnant women and their children; develop and implement cost-effective and enhanced prenatal care services to high-risk pregnant women enrolled in Medicaid; develop an enhanced and cost-effective postpartum care services package for certain women; develop and implement a postpartum depression treatment network; and, develop or enhance statewide initiatives to improve the quality of maternal health care services.

To address a leading cause of maternal deaths in Texas, drug overdoses (most of which are attributed to opioid abuse), Sen. Lucio co-authored **Senate Bill 436** to strengthen statewide initiatives to improve maternal and newborn health for women with opioid use disorder. The bill directs the state's health department to work with the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force to develop tools and implement best practices necessary to better identify and treat women with opioid use disorder and afflicted newborns.

In order to improve access for Medicaid eligible pregnant women to critical transportation for medical appointments, Sen. Lucio co-sponsored **House Bill 25** to require HHSC to develop a pilot program to provide Medicaid transportation services to pregnant women and new mothers, along with their children. Advocates report this will increase access to vital health care services, reduce pregnancy complications, improve maternal and infant health, and prevent unnecessary trips to emergency rooms.

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF SENATE DISTRICT 27

Border and Rural Water-related Infrastructure

Sen. Lucio demonstrated unwavering leadership to help communities meet their water and wastewater infrastructure needs so that their residents are assisted with projects and services that meet state standards.

The **Texas Water Development Board** reported to the Legislature that bonding authority, authored by Sen. Lucio in 2007, to fund the Economically Distressed Areas Program (EDAP), had all been exhausted. In response, Sen. Lucio authored **Senate Joint Resolution 79** to provide millions of dollars in new, revolving bonding authority to help communities, like those in South Texas, meet their critical water and wastewater needs. This coming November, Texans will have the opportunity to vote on **Proposition 2** which, if approved, will fund EDAP with **\$200 million** in continual bonding authority.

Senate Bill 2452, a related Sen. Lucio bill, authorizes the Water Development Board to supplement this new \$200 million bonding authority (if Proposition 2 passes) with other sources of financial assistance to strengthen the Board's efforts to help families and communities, like those located on or near the Texas border, fund greatly needed water-related infrastructure.

Local Public Health Initiatives

Public health officials report a strong need to contain mosquito-borne diseases in areas of the border delta that tend to flood when it rains. In response to these reports, Sen. Lucio authored and sponsored a series of bills to address the public health needs of the border region.

Sen. Lucio's **Senate Bill 1113** better protects the Valley's public health by permanently including in statute an emergency waiver provided by the Agriculture Department to Hidalgo County in 2018 to assist all local health departments in need of emergency mosquito control applicators.

Senate Bill 1312, authored by Sen. Lucio, complements SB 1113 to help contain emerging diseases which pose unique public health challenges (e.g., Zika and Dengue) by creating the means to permanently increase our local public health resources. At the request of public health officials from Cameron and Hidalgo Counties, the bill provides additional certified individuals to control these mosquito-spread diseases by creating a unique pesticide applicator license for the border region. The new specialized license will aid the Valley's border health departments address their need for additional certified staff.

Sen. Lucio also sponsored **House Bill 2566** to give Cameron County authority to provide better control over the disposal of litter and the removal of illegally dumped litter, and to address the storage and abandonment of tires and appliances that create mosquito breeding habitats.

Protecting the Coast and Marine Life

The General Land Office (GLO) reports that negative consequences occur when the Texas coast erodes, including: devastation of port and industrial infrastructure; decreased commercial and residential property values; increased storm surge risk; adverse impact on tourism; and endangerment of marine habitat. According to the GLO, 64% of the Texas coast is eroding at an average rate of about 6-feet per year, with some locations losing more than 30-feet per year.

In order to protect our Texas coast and coastal communities, Sen. Lucio worked with the GLO to dedicate funding to combat coastal erosion. Specifically, he successfully added the provisions of his **Senate Bill 1719** onto **House Bill 6** to provide a mechanism for continued funding to combat coastal erosion. Thanks to these efforts, the Coastal Erosion Planning and Response Act Program has a dedicated revenue stream.

To strengthen this effort, Sen. Lucio worked with the members of the Coastal Delegation to sponsor and pass **House Bill 2065** to allow the use of state general revenue to fund Texas' Artificial Reef Program, which helps create and provide a complex, durable, and stable habitat for marine life. The program enhances habitats to sustain marine wildlife in the Texas coast where there is a lack of naturally occurring reefs. Consequently, the program plays a critical role in assisting the Gulf of Mexico host marine life that ultimately supports tourism, which contributes to our local economies.

Better Flood Control

Since flooding has been more frequent throughout our state, especially in coastal communities, a series of bills were passed into law aimed at providing critical resources to Texas communities.

Through **Senate Bill 7**, joint-authored by Sen. Lucio, the Legislature increased rebuilding resources by creating two funds to help local governments meet their share of matching grants needed to complete flood and storm mitigation projects. A related initiative, **House Joint Resolution 4**, was passed which calls for a constitutional amendment (**Proposition 8** in November) to provide for the creation of the Flood Infrastructure Fund to assist in the financing of drainage, flood mitigation, and flood control projects.

The Legislature created the framework of a State Flood Plan through **Senate Bill 8**, joint-authored by Sen. Lucio, by directing state agencies to share flood prevention plans with our local units of government.

Locally, Sen. Lucio worked with members of the Valley Delegation to address the local drainage and flood control needs in Cameron County by sponsoring **House Bill 4726** to establish the Cameron

County Flood Control District. This bill provides Cameron County officials the needed authority to address critical drainage infrastructure, plan for future flooding events, and implement long-term projects to reduce damage caused by flooding.

Empowering Border Agriculture Trade

In order to address the lack of sufficient federal inspectors at international ports of entry, which leads to long wait times for agricultural produce trade inspections, Sen. Lucio worked to reauthorize the agricultural inspection grant program he first established in 2015 (with the passage of **then-Senate Bill 797**) by sponsoring **House Bill 2155**. Advocates report this authorization and related appropriated funds will increase and facilitate agriculture trade and commerce in the Rio Grande Valley and in the State of Texas.

Addressing the Rio Grande Valley's Transit Needs

Stakeholders informed the Legislature that the RGV could be greatly assisted with the ability to establish a Regional Transit Authority to address the transit needs of Valley residents. Similar authorities in other parts of the state have proven to be essential in providing efficient transportation services for their constituents.

To better create, develop, and maintain means of public transit, Sen. Lucio sponsored **House Bill 71** authorizing Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties to establish a Regional Transit Authority. Given the rapid population growth in South Texas, this regional authority will provide the necessary oversight and coordination to successfully meet the region's critical transit needs.

Providing Greater Growth and Development

Sen. Lucio worked with members of the Legislature to add elements of his **Senate Bill 2194** onto **House Bill 2199**, and to pass **House Bill 4347**, both of which he co-sponsored, to help the City of San Benito meet its main legislative priority. These bills aid in the development of a proposed hotel and convention center project, as well as the development of sports and entertainment facilities.



Sen. Lucio joined by officials from the Hidalgo Co. Health Dept. & TX Dept. of Ag. testifying on critical public health initiatives.

HELPING COMMUNITIES WITH DISASTER RECOVERY

A number of disaster response bills passed aimed at building on lessons learned from past recovery efforts and helping those in need. Many of these were proposed in interim studies undertaken by different committees, like the **Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee**, which Sen. Lucio chairs.

Tax Protection for Disaster Victims

In 2013, Sen. Lucio established tax protection from excessive tax appraisals of disaster rebuilt homes for Hurricane Dolly victims. Now in 2019, Sen. Lucio authored **Senate Bill 812** to permanently extend this tax protection to Hurricane Harvey victims and to victims of future disasters.

The broadened tax protection prevents current, and future, victims of disasters (natural or man-made) from sudden jumps in local property taxes of homes rebuilt or replaced through the state's disaster recovery program. This ensures surviving families do not suffer more by being taxed out of rebuilt homes.

Helping to Rebuild Faster After a Disaster

With Sen. Lucio's **Senate Bill 289**, Brownsville's "Rapido" Disaster Demonstration Program (developed in the wake of Hurricane Dolly) was permanently set into statute allowing coastal communities to rebuild homes in a faster, more efficient manner by facilitating critical planning before a disaster strikes.

This bill also establishes a disaster recovery task force to operate throughout the long-term recovery period following disasters. The task force will provide specialized assistance for communities and individuals to address financial issues, available federal assistance programs, and recovery, as well as resiliency planning to speed recovery efforts at the local level.

Working to Provide Disaster Victims Expedited Assistance

In order to further speed up recovery efforts, Sen. Lucio authored **Senate Bill 428**, ultimately passed in **House Bill 2330**, which Sen. Lucio sponsored, directing state agencies to work with federal counterparts on how the state can reduce bureaucracy and paperwork for victims of disasters needing immediate state and federal assistance. State agencies are directed to study both state management and intake systems for state and federal disaster assistance where survivors of disasters could be better assisted with a single application form.



Sen. Lucio joined by Senators Menendez (D-San Antonio), Johnson (D-Dallas), & Hinojosa (D-McAllen) in voting favorably on the Senate floor by signaling a "one", indicating voting "aye."

DELIVERING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Not only did the Legislature provide unprecedented recovery and reconstruction reforms, it also passed a strong, pro-economic development agenda.

Re-Authorizing a Critical Means to Incentivize Economic Development

The Legislature passed **House Bill 3143** to ensure a critical economic development tool (the Property Redevelopment and Tax Abatement Act) did not expire this year and extended its life by an additional 10 years. This allows local governments to continue to enter into critical "Chapter 312 Agreements" to incentivize the creation, expansion, or modernization of industrial, commercial, or residential projects.

Stakeholders report that without this economic development tool, Texas would be at a significant disadvantage while competing against other states to attract highly capitalized investment projects. With this re-authorization, cities, counties, and special districts are allowed to spur capital investment by attracting new industries, as well as retaining and expanding existing businesses while engendering job growth and long-term economic advancement.

Creating Greater Capital Investment

As **Chairman of the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations**, Sen. Lucio authored **Senate Bill 1474**, the modernization of Texas' Private Activity Bond Program, to foster greater private capital investment and encourage stronger, strategic public-private partnerships.

Through his omnibus bond financing reforms, Chairman Lucio streamlined Texas' statutes that regulate the use of tax-exempt bonds to yield greater, more efficient results and to maximize bond financing. Housing and industry advocates informed the Legislature that SB 1474 was a key economic development and job creating victory for Texas.

This all-encompassing reform impacts (among others): Economic Development Corporations; Industrial

Development Corporations; Public Facility Corporations; and Single- and Multi-Family developers, providers, and financial underwriters. State housing officials report that these reforms provide developers the necessary flexibility to put together, and close, complex financing packages that will help meet an ever-growing housing demand.

Overall, Chairman Lucio's rewrite of this essential financial resource: allows issuers more flexibility in their closing deadlines; encourages larger project reservations; grants earlier access to program funds; allows additional issuers to use the program; and provides issuers a greater opportunity to carryforward project-specific funds.

Improving Student Financial Aid Resources

Chairman Lucio worked hand-in-hand with the **Higher Education Coordinating Board** and the state's **higher education authorities** to use Tax-Exempt Private Activity Bonds to finance, support, and offer critically needed financial aid in the form of student loans and student loan debt refinancing.

Through his **Senate Bill 1474**, Chairman Lucio increased the Coordinating Board's ability and effectiveness to better address the financial needs of students year round by increasing their yearly allocation of this critical financing resource from **\$75 million to \$200 million**.

Additionally, with a steadfast commitment to help students pursuing higher education opportunities, Chairman Lucio reformed state laws to enable higher education authorities to access and use an annual **\$100 million allocation**. Previously, state statutes had prevented these authorities from issuing any tax-exempt bond during the last 10 years. With these enacted reforms, higher education authorities will be able to help students achieve their higher education goals, as well as help post-graduate students and parents refinance student loan debt at interest rates that are among the lowest in the country.

ADDRESSING STATE PRIORITIES

SCHOOL FINANCE SYSTEM

With **House Bill 3** the Legislature undertook a comprehensive overhaul of Texas’ public school finance system and provided an unprecedented amount of new state money to education, while also increasing teacher pay, and targeting additional resources to schools that need them the most - like those in South Texas.

The reform directs over \$6.5 billion in new state dollars to significantly increase funding for each student by over \$1,000 and strengthen specialized funding for vulnerable student populations (e.g., children from low-income families and English language learners) to ensure these students are able to access the resources they need to achieve academic success. Additionally, to attract and retain effective educators who can best assist our children reach their full potential, the Legislature required, through HB 3, a portion of new state money be used on teacher pay raises.

As **Vice-Chairman of the Senate Education Committee**, Sen. Lucio was involved in crafting the School Finance Reform and offered several successful improvements to House Bill 3 that:

- Direct additional teacher incentive funding to schools that need it the most;
- Provide financial incentives for experienced educators to mentor new teachers; and
- Require further study of the special education program to ensure these vulnerable students are properly served by Texas schools.

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

Through HB 3, the Legislature allocated \$5 billion in state funding to offset local revenue, funding the reduction of school property taxes. Additionally, the Legislature further provided with **Senate Bill 2** a mechanism that will lead to property tax relief by providing voter control over the growth of property taxes greater than 3.5%. This compromise slows the rate of growth of property taxes without unduly handicapping a local government’s ability to have necessary revenues to adequately address their local needs. In turn, SB 2 protects families from excessive property tax increases, allows tax payments to remain manageable and predictable, and provides voters an influential voice in setting tax rates.

MAKING SCHOOLS SAFER

In response to the tragic Santa Fe High School shooting, **Senate Bill 11**, co-authored by Sen. Lucio, allocates over \$100 million in state funding to help schools pay for improvements to student safety, including training for security personnel, preventative services, and infrastructure upgrades. The bill also strengthens emergency preparation requirements for schools and improves communication between educators, law enforcement, and parents to help prevent or mitigate school shootings.

Sen. Lucio also authored and sponsored several additional school safety measures. **Senate Bill 1707**, authored by Sen. Lucio, clarifies the role of law enforcement officers on school campuses. The bill helps keep students safe while building a beneficial school environment for students and staff by ensuring that school police officers are focused on law enforcement, and not on routine disciplinary issues.

As part of the Legislature’s efforts to improve school safety, concerned advocates report that Texas could strengthen its effort to improve first aid-related resources and other safety equipment in public schools. To address this need, Sen. Lucio sponsored **House Bill 496** to ensure that all public schools in Texas have the protocols in place and have traumatic bleeding control kits available with all the medical equipment necessary to better provide emergency treatment to the wounded in life threatening situations.

The Legislature also recognized that the best time to stop a tragedy in schools is before it happens and student mental health must be addressed to help prevent such incidents from occurring. Through Senate Bill 11 and **House Bill 18**, another student safety measure co-sponsored by Sen. Lucio, schools will have more resources available to address student mental health through their existing health programs. SB 11 also includes critical provisions from Sen. Lucio’s **Senate**

Bill 1563 to create local and statewide inventories of mental health resources, so that schools are better able to access the programs they need to provide for the comprehensive health of their students and identify potential problems to better assist students.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Sen. Lucio co-authored and co-sponsored several bills that will make it easier for South Texas students to attend, transfer between, and graduate from institutions of higher education. For example:

- **Senate Bill 25** requires colleges and universities to publicize which courses will, and will not, transfer to or from other institutions;
- **Senate Bill 213** allows students who have mastered high school course material and who struggle with high-stakes testing to graduate through alternative methods approved by their school; and
- **House Bill 3601** allows active Texas military personnel to gain credit toward a degree through demonstration of skills learned during their military service.



Sen. Lucio advocating for South Texas’ legislative priorities in the budget with Senate Finance Chairwoman Jane Nelson.

STATE BUDGET

Due to our robust economy, the Legislature had access to the necessary funds, with a total state budget of over **\$250 billion**, to achieve a number of important priorities. Our region was a big winner with the following higher education funding:

District 27 Higher Education Appropriations	
UTRGV, \$266.2 million	Texas Southmost College, \$14.1 million
UTRGV School of Medicine, \$68.9 million	TSTC-Harlingen, \$58.8 million
Texas A&M Kingsville, \$108.8 million	South Texas College, \$84.3 million

District 27 Local Priorities Funded (nearly \$8 million)

City of Edcouch Parks
City of La Feria Parks
Wellness Center, Pharr
Training Facility in Cameron County

Additional Funding Highlights

Retired Teachers: With an appropriation of over \$1.1 billion, Senator Lucio co-authored **Senate Bill 12** and **Senate Bill 500** to ensure the continued solvency of the Teacher Retirement System, and provide most retired educators with a 13th check in 2019.

Student Safety: In addition to the \$100 million appropriated under Senate Bill 11, the budget directs a further \$100 million toward schools to upgrade their safety infrastructure, such as reinforced entryways, perimeter fencing, or metal detectors.

Disaster Recovery: The supplemental budget, **Senate Bill 500**, allocates \$3.5 billion from the state’s “Rainy Day Fund” to address Hurricane Harvey damage, assist local government recovery efforts, and invest in long-term infrastructure projects intended to lessen the effects from future disasters.

Ballot Language for the November 2019 Constitutional Amendments

This November, Texans will have the opportunity to approve the following amendments with a majority vote. A condensed “Analyses of Proposed Constitutional Amendments” may be found on the Texas Legislative Council’s publications tab at www.tlc.texas.gov.

Proposition 1 (HJR 72): “The constitutional amendment permitting a person to hold more than one office as a municipal judge at the same time.”

Proposition 2 (SJR 79): “The constitutional amendment providing for the issuance of additional general obligation bonds by the Texas Water Development Board in an amount not to exceed \$200 million to provide financial assistance for the development of certain projects in economically distressed areas.”

Proposition 3 (HJR 34): “The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to provide for a temporary exemption from ad valorem taxation of a portion of the appraised value of certain property damaged by a disaster.”

Proposition 4 (HJR 38): “The constitutional amendment prohibiting the imposition of an individual income tax, including a tax on an individual’s share of partnership and unincorporated association income.”

Proposition 5 (SJR 24): “The constitutional amendment dedicating the revenue received from the existing state sales and use taxes that are imposed on sporting goods to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission to protect Texas’ natural areas, water quality, and history by acquiring, managing, and improving state and local parks and historic sites while not increasing the rate of the state sales and use taxes.”

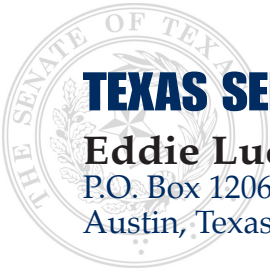
Proposition 6 (HJR 12): “The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to increase by \$3 billion the maximum bond amount authorized for the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas.”

Proposition 7 (HJR 151): “The constitutional amendment allowing increased distributions to the available school fund.”

Proposition 8 (HJR 4): “The constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the flood infrastructure fund to assist in the financing of drainage, flood mitigation, and flood control projects.”

Proposition 9 (HJR 95): “The constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to exempt from ad valorem taxation precious metal held in a precious metal depository located in this state.”

Proposition 10 (SJR 32): “The constitutional amendment to allow the transfer of a law enforcement animal to a qualified caretaker in certain circumstances.”



TEXAS SENATOR

Eddie Lucio, Jr.
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711-2068

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 2468
AUSTIN, TEXAS



Sen. Lucio listening to critical policy discussions from his desk in the Senate Chamber.

Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.

BROWNSVILLE 800 N. Interstate 69E, Suite 7 Brownsville, Texas 78521 (956) 548-0227 (956) 548-0440 Fax	PHARR 1210 W. Interstate 2, Ste. 10 Pharr, Texas 78577 (956) 787-5227 (956) 787-5337 Fax
RAYMONDVILLE 700 FM 3168 Raymondville, Texas 78580 (956) 689-1860, Ext. 230	AUSTIN State Capitol P.O. Box 12068 Austin, Texas 78711 (512) 463-0127 (512) 463-0061 Fax

You can email Sen. Lucio at his Senate web page:
<http://www.senate.texas.gov>